

REMARKS

The present application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated July 10, 2008. Claims 1, 3, 5, 11, 13, 15, 21, 22 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 11, 21, and 22 are in independent form. Claims 9, 10, 19, and 20 have been cancelled hereby without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein. Claims 1, 11, 21, and 22 have been amended hereby to define aspects of Applicant's invention more clearly. Favorable consideration is requested.

The Office Action states that Claims 1, 3, 5, 9-11, 13, 15, and 19-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0029474 (*Yada*) in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0093521 (*Schlonski et al.*). Cancellation of Claims 9, 10, 19, and 20 renders their rejections moot. Applicant submits that independent Claims 1, 11, 21, and 22, together with the claims dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is directed to an information processing apparatus that manages a predetermined device for performing communication over a network. The information processing apparatus includes: (1) a holding unit configured to hold corresponding information corresponding to first device identification information and second device identification information; (2) an obtaining unit configured to obtain accounting information, which includes a number of sheets printed, based on an image forming operation from the predetermined device; (3) a determination unit configured to compare a combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information which are obtained from the predetermined device with the corresponding

information held by the holding unit, and determine whether at least one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed; (4) a communication controlling unit configured to issue a notification to an external apparatus, when the determination unit determines that one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed and the other is not being managed, and not to issue a notification to the external apparatus when the determination unit determines that neither one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses; and (5) an updating unit configured to update the corresponding information held by the holding unit in accordance with an update notification, for updating the combination of the first device identification information and the second device identification information, from the external apparatus.

The notification issued by the communication controlling unit includes information indicating that either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed. The communication controlling unit restricts notifying the external apparatus of the accounting information obtained from the predetermined device by the obtaining unit if the determination unit determines either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and removes the restriction and notifies the external apparatus of the accounting information obtained by the obtaining unit, when the corresponding information is updated by the updating unit. In addition, the first device

identification information includes internet protocol address information, and the second device identification information includes media access control (MAC) address information.

A notable feature of Claim 1 is the communication controlling unit, which issues a notification to the external apparatus when the determination unit determines that one of first device identification information and second device identification information is being managed and the other is not being managed, and that does not issue a notification to the external apparatus when the determination unit determines that neither one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed. In addition, the communication controlling unit restricts notifying the external apparatus of accounting information obtained from a predetermined device by an obtaining unit, if the determination unit determines that either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and removes the restriction and notifies the external apparatus of the accounting information obtained by the obtaining unit when the corresponding information is updated by an updating unit.

Yada relates to an asset management system in which information regarding assets is gathered by a software program. Apparently, *Yada* teaches that asset management information can be updated automatically, and that an administrator must manually update the asset management information only when an asset is purchased or removed from service (paragraph 12). *Yada* discusses that, in a Step S8-2, a communication log is analyzed and a determination is made whether a MAC address and an IP address are those of an asset being managed (paragraph 62). If these addresses are not those of an asset being managed, an alarm notification, which indicates that the asset should be registered, is provided to an administrator (paragraph 62). Step

S8-2 of FIG. 8 encompass a first case in which one of the MAC address and the IP address is not managed and a second case in which both MAC address and the IP address are not managed. Thus, an alarm notification is issued if either the first case or the second case is true. Accordingly, *Yada* fails to disclose a communication controlling unit “that does not issue a notification to the external apparatus, when the determination unit determines that neither one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed,” as recited in Claim 1.

Moreover, *Yada* fails to teach or suggest that an alarm notification to the administrator is restricted, if it is determined that the MAC address and the IP address are not those of an asset being managed. More particularly, fails to teach or suggest that the an alarm notification, which includes information received from an asset, is restricted, if it is determined that the MAC address and the IP address are not those of an asset being managed. The Office Action dated July 10, 2008, refers to the Office Action dated November 19, 2007, in which the Examiner states that “Yada paragraph [0012] and [0062] in view of these paragraphs it is established that there will be not communications between the unmanaged device and the external apparatus until the issue is resolved and therefore, no information can be passed around over the network” (see page 8). Applicant notes that paragraphs 12 and 62 of *Yada* are silent regarding restricting issuance of an alarm notification. According to FIG. 8 of *Yada*, the only time that an alarm notification is not transmitted is when the MAC address and the IP address are those of a management target (and other conditions that are tested in Steps S8-4, S8-8, and S8-11 are met). Indeed, Step S8-2 of FIG. 8 of *Yada* shows that an alarm notification always is transmitted when the MAC address and the IP address are not those of a management target. Accordingly, *Yada*

discloses that an alarm notification is not restricted when the MAC address and the IP address are not those of a management target.

Schlonski et al. relates to an asset management system in which information about assets can be gathered and managed. The Office Action alleges that *Schlonski et al.* discloses the holding unit and the obtaining unit, which the Office Action concedes are not disclosed or suggested in *Yada*. However, nothing has been found in *Schlonski et al.* that is believed to cure the deficiencies of *Yada* identified above.

Applicant submits that a combination of *Yada* and *Schlonski et al.*, assuming such combination would even be permissible, would fail to teach or suggest an information processing apparatus that includes “a communication controlling unit configured to issue a notification to an external apparatus when said determination unit determines that one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed and the other is not being managed, and not to issue a notification to the external apparatus when said determination unit determines that neither one of the first device identification information and the second device identification information is being managed, the external apparatus being capable of receiving the notification through a predetermined communications line and managing a plurality of information processing apparatuses,” wherein the communication controlling unit “restricts notifying the external apparatus of the accounting information obtained from the predetermined device by said obtaining unit if said determination unit determines either the first device identification information or the second device identification information is not being managed, and removes the restriction and notifies the external apparatus of the accounting information obtained by said obtaining unit when the corresponding information is updated by said updating

unit,” as recited in Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is patentable over *Yada* and *Schlonski et al.*, and respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Independent Claims 11, 21, and 22 include features similar to those discussed above and also are believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above. The other rejected claims in the present application depend from one or another of Claims 1, 11, 21, and 22 discussed above, and therefore are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim also is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual consideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No petition to extend the time for response to the Office Action is deemed necessary for this Amendment. If, however, such a petition is required to make this Amendment timely filed, then this paper should be considered such a petition and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the requisite petition fee to Deposit Account 06-1205.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and an early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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